



# INSTRUCTIONS:

Circle your top 10 books. Bring the list with you to the next bookclub meeting (March 17th). We will decide on the next books by democratic vote. We will choose between 6-7 books.

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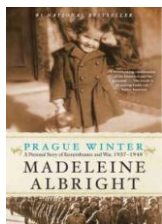
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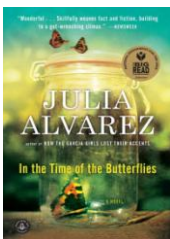
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### **Prague Winter by Madeleine Albright**

From former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright comes a moving and thoughtful memoir of her formative years in Czechoslovakia during the tumult of Nazi occupation, World War II, fascism, and the onset of the Cold War. An intensely personal journey into the past that offers vital lessons for the future, Prague Winter combines the intimacy of an autobiography with the drama of an exciting and well-told story, all underpinned by the gravity and intelligence of a serious work of history. The result is a highly readable and incisive work filled with tragedy and triumph, a resonant narrative informed by Albright's remarkable life experience and her characteristic candor in speaking hard truths.

2



### **In the Time of Butterflies by Julia Alvarez**

It is November 25, 1960, and three beautiful sisters have been found near their wrecked Jeep at the bottom of a 150-foot cliff on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. The official state newspaper reports their deaths as accidental. It does not mention that a fourth sister lives. Everybody knows of Las Mariposas—"The Butterflies." In this extraordinary novel, the voices of all four sisters—Minerva, Patria, María Teresa, and the survivor, Dedé—speak across the decades to tell their own stories, from hair ribbons and secret crushes to gunrunning and prison torture, and to describe the everyday horrors of life under Trujillo's rule.

3



### **The Aviator's Wife by Melanie Benjamin**

For much of her life, Anne Morrow, the shy daughter of the U.S. ambassador to Mexico, has stood in the shadows of those around her, including her millionaire father and vibrant older sister. Then Anne, a college senior with hidden literary aspirations, travels to Mexico City to spend Christmas with her family. There she meets Colonel Charles Lindbergh, fresh off his celebrated 1927 solo flight across the Atlantic. Drawing on the rich history of the twentieth century - from the late twenties to the mid-sixties - and featuring cameos from such notable characters as Joseph Kennedy and Amelia Earhart, The Aviator's Wife is a vividly imagined novel of a complicated marriage - revealing both its dizzying highs and its devastating lows.

4



### **The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion**

Joan Didion explores an intensely personal yet universal experience: a portrait of a marriage and a life, in good times and bad that will speak to anyone who has ever loved a husband or wife or child. Several days before Christmas 2003, John Gregory Dunne and Joan Didion saw their only daughter, Quintana, fall ill with what seemed at first flu, then pneumonia, then complete septic shock. She was put into an induced coma and placed on life support. Days later, the night before New Year's Eve the Dunes were just sitting down to dinner after visiting the hospital when John Gregory Dunne suffered a massive and fatal coronary.

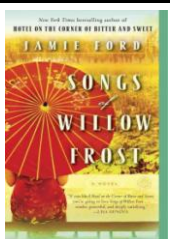
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### **Have Mother, Will Travel by Claire and Mia Fontaine**

The Fontaines are back with Have Mother, Will Travel, a beautiful, thoughtful, insightful, inspiring book that brilliantly captures the changing relationship between a mother and her adult daughter. Seen within the context of an unforgettable round-the-world adventure, the emotional milestones reached and the new understandings and appreciations achieved will warm the heart and nourish the soul, an extraordinary journey that should not be missed by armchair travelers and by mothers and daughters everywhere.

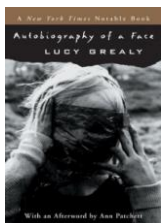
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### **Songs of Willow Frost by Jamie Ford**

12 yr old William Eng, a Chinese American boy, has lived at Seattle's Sacred Heart Orphanage ever since his mother's listless body was carried away from their small apartment five years ago. On his birthday, or rather, the day the nuns designate as his birthday, William glimpses an actress on the silver screen who goes by the name of Willow Frost. Struck by her features, William is convinced that the movie star is his mother, Liu Song. Determined to find Willow and prove that his mother is still alive, William escapes from Sacred Heart with his friend Charlotte. They navigate the streets of Seattle, where they must not only survive but confront the mysteries of William's past.

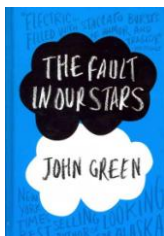
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### Autobiography of a Face by Lucy Grealy

At age nine, Lucy Grealy was diagnosed with a potentially terminal cancer. When she returned to school with a third of her jaw removed, she faced the cruel taunts of her classmates. In this strikingly candid memoir, Grealy tells her story of great suffering and remarkable strength without sentimentality and with considerable wit. Vividly portraying the pain of peer rejection and the guilty pleasures of wanting to be special, Grealy captures with unique insight what it is like as a child and young adult to be torn between two warring impulses: to feel that more than anything else we want to be loved for who we are, while wishing desperately and secretly to be perfect.

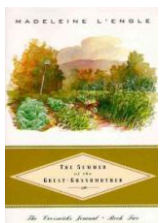
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### The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten. Insightful, bold, irreverent, and raw, *The Fault in Our Stars* is award-winning-author John Green's most ambitious and heartbreaking work yet, brilliantly exploring the funny, thrilling, and tragic business of being alive and in love.

9



### The Summer of the Great-Grandmother by Madeleine L'Engle

One 1970s summer, Madeleine L'Engle brings her mother to Crosswicks, the rambling country house where the extended family has spent extended vacations for many years. At ninety, the elder Madeleine is suffering from the ravages of the now vanished diagnosis, 'hardening of the arteries.' By times she is frightened, angry, or difficult; at night she cries out or tries to wander. Round-the-clock caregivers help with the strain, while the writer's own children and grandchildren figure in her journal with concern, affection, and wonder. The presence of the dwindling old lady provokes detailed recollections-direct and indirect memories-of the lives of her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, all named Madeleine.

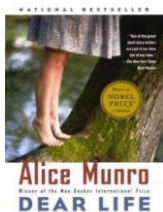
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### The Chaperone by Laura Moriarty

Only a few years before becoming a famous silent-film star and an icon of her generation, a fifteen-year-old Louise Brooks leaves Wichita, Kansas, to study with the prestigious Denishawn School of Dancing in New York. Much to her annoyance, she is accompanied by a thirty-six-year-old chaperone, who is neither mother nor friend. Cora Carlisle, a complicated but traditional woman with her own reasons for making the trip, has no idea what she's in for. Young Louise, already stunningly beautiful and sporting her famous black bob with blunt bangs, is known for her arrogance and her lack of respect for convention. Ultimately, the five weeks they spend together will transform their lives forever.

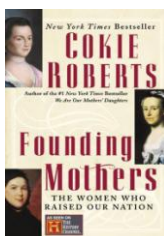
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### Dear Life by Alice Munro

In story after story in this brilliant new collection, Alice Munro pinpoints the moment a person is forever altered by a chance encounter, an action not taken, or a simple twist of fate. Her characters are flawed and fully human: a soldier returning from war and avoiding his fiancée, a wealthy woman deciding whether to confront a blackmailer, an adulterous mother and her neglected children, a guilt-ridden father, a young teacher jilted by her employer. Illumined by Munro's unflinching insight, these lives draw us in with their quiet depth and surprise us with unexpected turns.

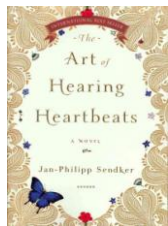
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### Founding Mothers by Cokie Roberts

While much has been written about the men who signed the Declaration of Independence, battled the British, and framed the Constitution, the wives, mothers, sisters and daughters they left behind have been little noticed by history. Drawing upon personal correspondence, private journals, and even favoured recipes, Roberts reveals the often surprising stories of these fascinating women, bringing to life the everyday trials and extraordinary triumphs of individuals like Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, Deborah Read Franklin, Eliza Pinckney, Catherine Littlefield Green, Esther DeBerdt Reed and Martha Washington -proving that without our exemplary women, the new country might have never survived.

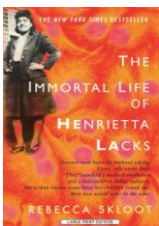
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### The Art of Hearing Heartbeats by Jan-Phillip Sendker

When a successful New York lawyer suddenly disappears without a trace, neither his wife nor his daughter Julia has any idea where he might be...until they find a love letter he wrote many years ago, to a Burmese woman they have never heard of. Intent on solving the mystery and coming to terms with her father's past, Julia decides to travel to the village where the woman lived. There she uncovers a tale of unimaginable hardship, resilience, and passion that will reaffirm the reader's belief in the power of love to move mountains.

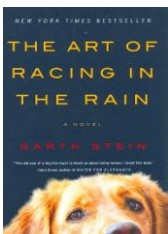
14



### The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

Henrietta Lacks, a poor Southern tobacco farmer, was buried in an unmarked grave sixty years ago. Yet her cells - taken without her knowledge, grown in culture and bought and sold by the billions -- became one of the most important tools in medical research. Rebecca Skloot takes us on an extraordinary journey from the "colored" ward of Johns Hopkins Hospital in the 1950s to East Baltimore today, where Henrietta's family struggles with her legacy.

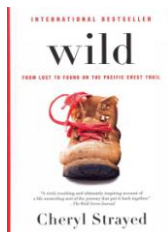
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### Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein

On the eve of his death, Enzo takes stock of his life, recalling all that he and his family have been through: the sacrifices Denny has made to succeed professionally; the unexpected loss of Eve, Denny's wife; the three-year battle over their daughter, Zoë, whose maternal grandparents pulled every string to gain custody. In the end, despite what he sees as his own limitations, Enzo comes through heroically to preserve the Swift family, holding in his heart the dream that Denny will become a racing champion with Zoë at his side. Having learned what it takes to be a compassionate and successful person, the wise canine can barely wait until his next lifetime, when

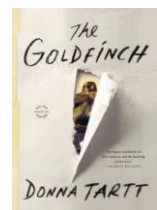
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### Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail by Cheryl Strayed

At twenty-two, Cheryl Strayed thought she had lost everything. In the wake of her mother's death, her family scattered and her own marriage was soon destroyed. Four years later, with nothing more to lose, she made the most impulsive decision of her life. With no experience or training, driven only by blind will, she would hike more than a thousand miles of the Pacific Crest Trail from the Mojave Desert through California and Oregon to Washington State—and she would do it alone. Told with suspense and style, , *Wild* powerfully captures the terrors and pleasures of one young woman forging ahead against all odds on a journey that maddened, strengthened, and ultimately healed her.

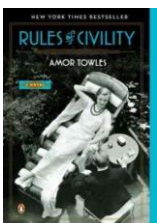
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### Goldfinch by Donna Tartt

It begins with a boy. Theo Decker, a thirteen-year-old New Yorker, miraculously survives an accident that kills his mother. Abandoned by his father, Theo is taken in by the family of a wealthy friend. Bewildered by his strange new home on Park Avenue, disturbed by schoolmates who don't know how to talk to him, and tormented above all by his unbearable longing for his mother, he clings to one thing that reminds him of her: a small, mysteriously captivating painting that ultimately draws Theo into the underworld of art. This novel is over 700 pages.

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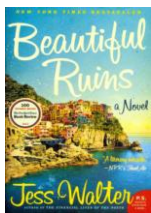


### Rules of Civility by Amor Towles

This sophisticated and entertaining first novel presents the story of a young woman whose life is on the brink of transformation. On the last night of 1937, twenty-five-year-old Katey Kontent is in a second-rate Greenwich Village jazz bar when Tinker Grey, a handsome banker, happens to sit down at the neighboring table. This chance encounter and its startling consequences propel Katey on a year-long journey into the upper echelons of New York society—where she will have little to rely upon other than a bracing wit and her own brand of cool nerve. With its sparkling depiction of New York's social strata, its intricate imagery and themes, and its immensely appealing characters, *Rules of Civility* won the hearts of readers and critics alike.



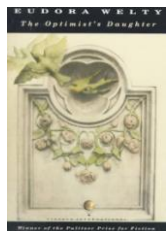
19



### Beautiful Ruins by Jess Walter

From the moment it opens—on a rocky patch of Italian coastline, circa 1962, when a daydreaming young innkeeper looks out over the water and spies a mysterious woman approaching him on a boat—Jess Walter's *Beautiful Ruins* is a dazzling, yet deeply human, roller coaster of a novel. From the lavish set of Cleopatra to the shabby revelry of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, to the back lots of contemporary Hollywood, *Beautiful Ruins* is gloriously inventive and constantly surprising—a story of flawed yet fascinating people navigating the rocky shores of their lives while clinging to their improbable dreams.

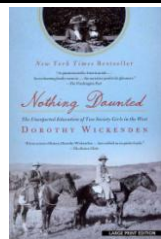
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### The Optimist's Daughter by Eudora Welty

The optimist in question is 71-year-old Judge McKelva, who has come to a New Orleans hospital from Mount Salus, Mississippi, complaining of a "disturbance" in his vision. To his daughter, Laurel, it's as rare for him to admit "self-concern" as it is for him to be sick. The subsequent operation on the judge's eye goes well, but the recovery does not. He lies still with both eyes heavily bandaged, growing ever more passive until finally, he simply dies. Together Fay and Laurel travel to Mount Salus to bury him, and the novel begins the inward spiral that leads Laurel to the moment when "all she had found had found her," when the "deepest spring in her heart had uncovered itself" and begins to flow again.

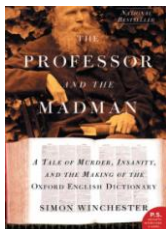
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### Nothing Daunted by Dorothy Wickenden

In the summer of 1916, Dorothy Woodruff and Rosamond Underwood, bored by society luncheons, charity work, and the effete men who courted them, left their families in Auburn, New York, to teach school in the wilds of northwestern Colorado. They lived with a family of homesteaders in the Elkhead Mountains and rode to school on horseback, often in blinding blizzards. Nearly a hundred years later, Dorothy Wickenden, the granddaughter of Dorothy Woodruff, found the teachers' buoyant letters home, which captured the voices of the pioneer women, the children, and other unforgettable people the women got to know. Wickenden has created an exhilarating saga about two intrepid women and the "settling up" of the West.

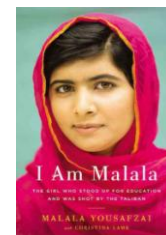
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### The Professor and the Madman by Simon Winchester

*The Professor and the Madman*, masterfully researched and eloquently written, is an extraordinary tale of madness, genius, and the incredible obsessions of two remarkable men that led to the making of the Oxford English Dictionary -- and literary history. The compilation of the OED began in 1857, it was one of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken. As definitions were collected, the overseeing committee, led by Professor James Murray, discovered that one man, Dr. W. C. Minor, had submitted more than ten thousand. When the committee insisted on honoring him, a shocking truth came to light: Dr. Minor, an American Civil War veteran, was also an inmate at an asylum for the criminally insane.

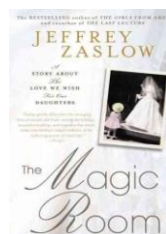
23



### I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive. Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she has become a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.

24



### The Magic Room by Jeffrey Zaslow

*The Magic Room* tells the stories of memorable women on the brink of commitment. Run by the same family for four generations, Becker's has witnessed transformations in how America views the institution of marriage: some of the shop's clientele are becoming stepmothers, some are older brides, some are pregnant. The lessons Zaslow shares from within the Magic Room are at times joyful, at times heartbreaking, and always with insight on marriage, family, and the lessons that parents-especially mothers-pass on to their daughters about love. Weaving together secrets, memories, and family tales, *The Magic Room* explores the emotional lives of women in the twenty-first century.